

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3701

To establish the More Books for Africa Program to facilitate the donation, processing, shipping, and distribution of text and library books to African schools, libraries, community centers, and other centers of learning in partnership with United States-based entities, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 1, 2009

Ms. MCCOLLUM introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To establish the More Books for Africa Program to facilitate the donation, processing, shipping, and distribution of text and library books to African schools, libraries, community centers, and other centers of learning in partnership with United States-based entities, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “More Books for Africa
5 Act of 2009”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds the following:

3 (1) The World Bank and other donor organiza-
4 tions have determined that next to a good teacher,
5 a good school book is the best and most cost-effec-
6 tive means of advancing education in African
7 schools.

8 (2) The World Bank and other organizations
9 have determined that there is a chronic shortage of
10 text and library books in schools and libraries across
11 Africa, with students left without books or forced to
12 share books at a ratio of 10:1.

13 (3) The countries of Africa have the world's
14 lowest literacy rates, undermining development and
15 weakening citizens' power to effect socioeconomic
16 and political change.

17 (4) Both the Millennium Development Goals
18 and the Education For All initiatives target in-
19 creased literacy rates by 2015, especially among
20 women and girls, as a key development goal in Afri-
21 ca and the developing world.

22 (5) Most African children who attend school
23 have never owned a book of their own. In many
24 classrooms, 10–20 students share one textbook.

1 (6) Every year of education has been shown to
2 raise a person's income potential by at least 10 per-
3 cent.

4 (7) In sub-Saharan Africa, 43.5 percent of the
5 total population is under 14 years old.

6 (8) Books and labor to pack these books are
7 currently being donated by citizens across the
8 United States to assist in literacy efforts in Africa.

9 (9) 22,000 books can be shipped in one cargo
10 container and delivered to Africa for an average cost
11 of \$11,000.

12 (10) Not-for-profit organizations, through the
13 use of donated books and labor from United States
14 citizens, as well as cash donations, have been able to
15 ship a donated book to Africa for only 50 cents per
16 book, resulting in tremendous cost-efficiency in a
17 time of budget challenges.

18 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

19 It is the sense of Congress that—

20 (1) the availability of textbooks and library
21 books is a critical component of the massive invest-
22 ment by the United States in primary, secondary,
23 higher, and adult community education; and

1 (2) the donation of textbooks and library books
2 is a powerful tool of public diplomacy and important
3 to United States national security.

4 **SEC. 4. MORE BOOKS FOR AFRICA PROGRAM.**

5 (a) ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSE.—The Adminis-
6 trator of the United States Agency for International De-
7 velopment (USAID), in consultation with the Basic Edu-
8 cation Program administered by USAID, shall establish
9 and administer a program to be known as the “More
10 Books for Africa Program” (in this Act referred to as the
11 “Program”) to facilitate the donation, processing, ship-
12 ping, and distribution of not fewer than 3,000,000 text
13 and library books per year to African schools, libraries,
14 community centers, and other centers of learning in part-
15 nership with United States-based entities.

16 (b) DONATIONS.—

17 (1) IN GENERAL.—All text and library books
18 sent to Africa through the Program may come only
19 from unrestricted donations from citizens, not-for-
20 profits, educational institutions, libraries, and pri-
21 vate companies.

22 (A) INITIATIVE.—The Program shall focus on
23 the donation and distribution of text and library
24 books pertaining to law and democracy, health and

1 medicine, science and math, and other pertinent sub-
2 ject specific areas.

3 (c) QUALITY OF BOOKS.—Donated text and library
4 books shall be evaluated based on—

5 (1) presence of an attached cover and all pages
6 relevant to the subject matter of such books;

7 (2) condition of book cover and pages, such
8 that the cover and all pages shall have no major rips
9 or stains; and

10 (3) legibility of text, such that all text should
11 be legible.

12 (d) UNITED STATES-BASED PARTNERSHIPS.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Program shall encour-
14 age partnerships with faith-based organizations,
15 community organizations, K–12 educational institu-
16 tions, and private companies in the United States
17 for the purpose of leveraging funds and collecting
18 donated text and library books.

19 (2) DONATION AND SHIPMENT.—The Program
20 shall help United States entities referred to in para-
21 graph (1) sponsor the donation and shipment of text
22 and library books to communities in Africa and fos-
23 ter cross-cultural relations between such commu-
24 nities.

1 (3) VOLUNTEERS.—The Program shall leverage
2 the work of volunteers in the collection of donated
3 text and library books and the preparation of such
4 book shipments.

5 (e) AFRICA-BASED PARTNERSHIPS.—

6 (1) MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION.—The Program
7 shall encourage partnerships with African ministries
8 of education (or similar) to aid in the identification
9 and distribution of text and library books to commu-
10 nities in need.

11 (2) UNITED STATES AMBASSADORS.—The Pro-
12 gram shall encourage United States Ambassadors to
13 African countries to make the establishment of li-
14 braries and donations of text and library books to
15 schools on behalf of the United States a priority in
16 their work and in the use of the Ambassador's Spe-
17 cial Self-Help Program.

18 (3) PEACE CORPS.—The Program shall leverage
19 the work in Africa of the Peace Corps and its volun-
20 teers in the distribution of text and library books to
21 communities in Africa.

22 (4) NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS.—The
23 Program shall encourage partnerships with local Af-
24 rican nongovernmental organizations and community

1 organizations to aid in the distribution of text and
2 library books.

3 (5) LITERACY ORGANIZATIONS.—The Program
4 shall encourage collaboration with African literacy
5 organizations to provide training of librarians and
6 teachers in text and library book use, distribution of
7 such books to in-country locations, and clearance of
8 such book containers from port locations.

9 (f) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—Amounts appropriated pur-
11 suant to the authorization of appropriations in sec-
12 tion 6 may be used to cover the following costs asso-
13 ciated with the Program:

14 (A) Collection and processing of donated
15 text and library books.

16 (B) Shipping such books to Africa.

17 (C) Distribution of such books.

18 (D) Establishing partnerships in accord-
19 ance with subsections (d) and (e).

20 (2) PROHIBITIONS.—

21 (A) PURCHASE AND DEVELOPMENT.—
22 Amounts authorized to be appropriated pursu-
23 ant to section 6 to carry out the Program may
24 not be used for the purchase or development of
25 text and library books under the Program.

1 (B) AMOUNTS.—The cost for collecting,
2 processing, shipping, and distributing text and
3 library books under the Program may not ex-
4 ceed \$750 per 1,000 books.

5 (g) MONITORING AND EVALUATION.—

6 (1) SAFEGUARDS.—The Administrator of
7 USAID shall establish safeguards to ensure that
8 text and library books donated under the Program
9 are not resold on the African market.

10 (2) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the
11 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of
12 State shall submit to Congress a report on the Pro-
13 gram . The report shall describe—

14 (A) the number of text and library books
15 donated under the Program;

16 (B) the use of text and library books do-
17 nated under the Program;

18 (C) the entities receiving text and library
19 books donated under the Program, including
20 end recipients and any intermediary entities in-
21 volved in such book distribution within African
22 countries; and

23 (D) the participation of the Ambassador’s
24 Special Self-Help Program, including a list of
25 participating USAID missions.

1 (h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
2 authorized to be appropriated to the Administrator of
3 USAID \$3,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2010 through
4 2014 for purposes of establishing and implementing the
5 Program.

